

Letter from the IGF Secretariat

As we approach the 11th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals, and Sustainable Development (IGF), we would like to highlight certain developments of the past year, and underline the key objectives for the meeting this year.

The IGF has enjoyed success to date because of the calibre of government officials it continues to attract in order to exchange views on global trends, individual country challenges and lessons learned relating to the mining sector. With the addition of France, Germany, Netherlands, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Rwanda to the IGF family in September of this year, membership now stands at 54 countries. Other important organizations such as international financial institutions, multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations, industry associations, donor governments and other actors are also increasingly well represented at the IGF AGM, as they recognize the value of engagement with this important network. This year's AGM is no exception. Over 80 organizations are taking part in this year's meeting, which is a clear indication of the IGF's growing significance and relevance for sustainable development.

Since our last AGM the IGF has held several very successful regional events, including a two day scoping workshop on the [Guidance for Governments on Managing Artisanal and Small-scale Mining \(ASM\)](#) during Indaba, a joint session with UNICEF Canada on industry's perspective on children and mining, and a joint session with the World Gold Council on the socio-economic contribution of responsible gold mining at the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada's annual convention. Through support from the Government of Canada to the International Institute for Sustainable Development, three IGF Members (Dominican Republic, Uganda and Madagascar) have successfully finished assessments of their mineral regimes using the IGF Mining Policy Framework, and Suriname completed an integrated eco-system management approach for mining regions. The IGF Secretariat has also launched a monthly newsletter of relevant updates, events, reports and opportunities in the sector, which reaches over 2000 individuals worldwide.

For this year's AGM, the Secretariat has developed a focused agenda. The overarching aim of the meeting is to advance our objectives in implementing the Mining Policy Framework and in building a stronger IGF. The thematic focus this year will be on "Post-Mining Transition and Environmental Management" which was identified by IGF member countries as a priority following the 2014 AGM.

International attention on the importance of post-mining transition and responsible environmental management in the minerals sector has continued to increase over recent years. A critical component of responsible resource development is integrated environmental management, which needs to be paired with economic and social plans and trajectories for post-mining transition. It is also vitally important for local populations that their perspectives and expectations be included in the mine closure designs of companies in order to make successful reclamation and transition possible. How to effectively manage environmental, economic and social challenges and associated financial implications to maximize the opportunities that come with mine reclamation and greater initial community engagement is the focus of the 11th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development (IGF) in 2015.

Significant attention will also be paid to the broader issue of sustainable development, the contribution the mining sector can make, and some of the challenges the sector itself faces with regards to its own sustainability. Global negotiations on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals concluded in September of 2015. This year's IGF AGM presents a valuable opportunity to reflect on key ways to advance sustainable development objectives connected with the minerals sector. The IGF is interested in ensuring appropriate recognition of the mineral sector and its contribution to sustainable development, including the role of the IGF as the unique global forum for addressing



these issues, and our Mining Policy Framework as key guidance for advancing sustainability through mineral development.

It is with great anticipation that we look forward to the in-depth presentations and dynamic discussions we will share during this year's AGM. This rich dialogue – the hallmark of the IGF – is invaluable to all participants, and I encourage your active engagement during these sessions.

Due to positive feedback received from IGF members, and by popular request from various international organizations, we will continue with the IGF Networking Fair this year, which will take place during the morning registration period (09:00–10:00) and during the lunch break (13:00–15:00). The Fair will provide ample opportunity to connect with participants, and learn about the work of a variety of organizations present at the meeting. The Fair will feature additional presentations by civil society organizations, consultancy firms, industry, academia and international organizations. We would encourage your active participation given that the fair provides a networking opportunity for delegates to be informed of new initiatives and approaches to responsible resource development. Please note, the IGF provides this meeting space as a service. Information and initiatives presented does not imply IGF endorsement of the organization, or its services or products.

The IGF is a growing and evolving platform for country governments to engage with industry and civil society experts, and with each other, on best practices for sustainable development in leveraging their natural resource wealth. Looking ahead, it is important that we seek ways to strengthen and ensure the ongoing relevance of the IGF, and how it can complement existing initiatives relating to mineral governance and policy at the regional and international levels.

The Secretariat will be providing all delegates with additional information on participating organizations, their work and services, and will be seeking your feedback through the week.

Please find the draft agenda, Aide-Mémoire and copy of the draft Guidance for Governments on Managing ASM for your consideration. We look forward to seeing you in Geneva.

The IGF Secretariat

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